



## Key Person Policy

### Aim:

The safeguarding and welfare requirements section of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2024 paragraph 3.35 states that

*"Each child must be assigned a key person. Their role is to help ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents and/or carers."*

The key person should meet the needs of each child in their care and respond sensitively to their feelings, ideas, and behaviour, talking to parents to make sure that the child is being cared for appropriately for each family.

### The Role of the Key Person

The key person is the individual in the setting who ensures the child's needs are met, who understands their feelings, recognises their individuality, is familiar with their family background, and encourages the child's independence.

It is the key person's responsibility to:

- Develop and maintain secure trusting relationships with key children, parents, and carers. This means spending significant amounts of time interacting and playing with the child within the context of the group.
- Provide a secure base for key children by being physically and emotionally available to them, enabling them to feel safe to explore the environment.
- Support the child's interest by engaging in regular 'sustained shared thinking' providing plenty of opportunities for the child to talk and to be listened to.
- Understand and support children's difficult feelings by gentle sensitive responses. Comfort distressed children by acknowledging their feelings, offering explanations and reassurances calmly and gently.
- Acknowledge and allow children to express a range of feelings, anger, joy, distress, excitement, jealousy, and love in a safe environment.
- Have regular opportunities to reflect on aspects of key working including talking about and assessing the child's needs with a skilled manager or colleague in confidence.
- Establish warm supportive relationships with key children through regular observation so that they are 'tuned in' to them and can understand when a child needs security and when they need to explore.
- Maintain online records of each child's development, to track progress and plan next steps. Share observations with children and with parents via Tapestry.
- Work with professionals from external agencies as and when required to support a child's needs.

West Byfleet Nursery provides parents with information regarding the role of the key person in our brochure, and our induction pack.

Staff are provided with this information as part of the recruitment and induction process.

Children are allocated to a room based on the availability of space that matches their session pattern. Their key person is then assigned, from that room's staff, based on the best fit between staff rota and the child's attendance.

We encourage children to build strong relationships with all the staff that work in their room so that should their key person be absent for any reason, there are always adults that they trust and are familiar with in session. We facilitate this by keeping a strong stable core staff within each room and ensuring staff turnover is kept to a minimum. Parents are kept informed of staff changes via our newsletter and by personal letter or email on the rare occasions it is necessary to change a child's key person.

Staff are given the opportunity to discuss any issues that may arise as part of their key person role in regular supervisions. In addition, the nursery operates an open-door policy so that any issues can be discussed with the managers as they arise.

Information regarding a child's class and the name of their key person is included in our induction pack which is provided on admission. Each key person has an 'all about me' sheet with a photograph and basic information, which is also included in the induction pack, to give the parents a transition tool to aid the child's settling in prior to the start date. Parents and child are also given the opportunity to meet their key person at an induction session prior to the child starting at the setting.

Our staff are made fully aware of professional boundaries that exist in an early years setting. Our expectations are clearly set out in our code of conduct which is issued to all staff on induction. These guidelines are reviewed regularly and further reinforced at staff meetings and at staff training sessions on inset days. If a child appears to become overly attached to a specific member of staff, steps are put in place to sensitively distance the relationship to a more appropriate level.

Parents are asked to complete an admission form and an 'all about my child' form prior to the child joining the nursery. The 'All about my child' form is given to the key person and forms part of the starting point for the child's profile. Parents also have the opportunity to information share in person at the induction session. Parents are welcome to make an appointment to discuss any concerns they may have with the key person at anytime.

Information regarding settling into the setting is contained in our brochure 'Welcome to West Byfleet Nursery' and in our Settling in policy. Parents are encouraged to discuss any specific concerns with their child's key person. Transitions to school and other settings are discussed with parents and children at the appropriate times in the academic year.

Signed: Ruth Claydon

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Review: October 2024